

Statement by OGASAWARA Ichiro
Ambassador of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
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— General Debate —
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Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, Ambassador Omar Hilale, on your assumption of the Chairpersonship of this First Committee. I assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Mr. Chair,

To borrow from the words of our new Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio, it is Japan's mission and responsibility to spread awareness of the realities of the disasters of Hiroshima and Nagasaki both across borders and down to future generations, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings. Japan is determined to make its utmost efforts to bridge the nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states, and to realize "a world free of nuclear weapons".

Mr. Chair,

Japan welcomes the five-year extension by the United States of America and the Russian Federation of the New START Treaty. We strongly hope that this progress will lead to the development of a broader framework of arms control, which involves other countries beyond the U.S. and Russia and covers a wider range of weapon systems. Japan encourages China to continue its efforts to fulfil its responsibility as a nuclear weapon state within the NPT and as an important player in the international community, and to engage in the bilateral dialogue in accordance with the obligation to negotiate in good faith under the NPT.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Japan attaches the utmost importance to the upcoming 10th NPT Review Conference to deliver a meaningful outcome. Realizing a world without nuclear weapons requires nuclear weapon states to take substantive measures. All States Parties, both nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states, should unite and work together to realize this shared purpose. Japan is ready to do its own fair share in this endeavor.

At the same time, we are currently living in a severe and unstable international security environment with growing tensions. The measures that we take to realize a world without nuclear weapons must take into account such realities.

Every year since 1994, Japan has submitted a draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the First Committee. This year again, Japan will submit a draft resolution titled “Joint Courses of Action and Future-oriented Dialogue towards a world without nuclear weapons”. We hope that this resolution will provide common ground on a wide-range of issues to be discussed at the upcoming NPT Review Conference and will garner the widest possible support from Member States to demonstrate our common will for the success of the Conference.

Mr. Chair,

Japan attaches particular importance to the early entry into force of the CTBT and to an early commencement of negotiations on an FMCT. Concrete actions should be taken to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear weapon use. Efforts to increase transparency and accountability through reporting will contribute to increasing trust and confidence among all Member States. As an active member of both the NPDI and the Stockholm Initiative, Japan is willing to contribute to these cross-regional collective efforts towards a world free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

Japan is deeply concerned about North Korea’s continued development of nuclear and missile capabilities, including developments highlighted by the IAEA Director General’s Report in August and the recent missile launches. Japan reaffirms its strong commitment to the goal of achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all of North Korea’s nuclear weapons, existing nuclear programs, and related facilities, as well as ballistic missiles of all ranges in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, we call on all Member States to fully implement these resolutions.

Mr. Chair,

The use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances is reprehensible and wholly contrary to international norms. In this regard, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) takes on an important role in establishing facts surrounding allegations of the use of chemical weapons and identifying its perpetrators. The relevance of the Biological Weapons Convention was clearly highlighted by various challenges posed during the pandemic. Serving as Chair of the BWC’s MX2 on relevant scientific and technological developments, Japan continues to make its best efforts towards a tangible outcome at the upcoming 9th BWC Review Conference in 2022.

Mr. Chair,

In the field of conventional arms, Japan welcomes the ongoing discussion on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS within the CCW framework and will redouble its efforts in developing common understandings on remaining key issues, eventually leading to international rule-making. The upcoming CCW Review Conference scheduled in December should demonstrate meaningful progress in this area. This year, Japan also gives high priority to international actions against land mines and improvised explosive devices. Through its Presidency of the 23rd Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II, and on the occasion of the APMBC's annual meeting, Japan strives to increase the visibility of these problems.

This year, Japan will submit again to the First Committee a draft resolution on "The Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects," alongside South Africa and Colombia. A consensus adoption of this resolution will demonstrate our united political will to tackle this pressing problem. Japan has supported a number of projects for the collection and disposal of SALWs as well as clearing mines and unexploded ordnances. Its contribution to the Saving Lives Entity (SALIENT) will further enhance the efforts to address these pressing problems. In 2020, our financial contribution in this field amounted to 39 million US Dollars.

Mr. Chair,

The international community should reach a common understanding on ways to reduce threats to space systems in order to maintain outer space as a peaceful, safe, stable, and sustainable environment, free from an arms race. Japan supports the establishment of an open ended working group to foster such common understanding. Japan also underscores the need to characterize responsible behavior, which would be a practical step to further developing and implementing norms, rules and principles related to outer space.

This year, the GGE and OEWG on Cybersecurity adopted their respective reports by consensus. Japan welcomes the reaffirmation of the application of international law in cyberspace, including the Charter of the United Nations in its entirety, while offering an additional layer of understanding of responsible state behavior and paving the way for deeper discussions on developing best practice. Japan will continue to actively contribute to promoting a free, fair and secure cyberspace.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.